



THE WINE ADVOCATE VALUE REPORT

Issue 184, 8-31-09 (with additional values from Issue 183, 6-30-09, where noted)

featured wines from **HAND PICKED SELECTIONS:**

•ROUSSILLON •LANGUEDOC •SOUTHERN RHÔNE •PROVENCE
•SAVOIE •ALSACE •CALIFORNIA •ARGENTINA

THE SOUTH OF FRANCE: VALUE HEAVEN

"In this survey of values, I offer notes on wines from the Languedoc and Roussillon...These regions remain among the world's most exciting and promising when it comes to red wine values, and the number of white wines deserving serious attention from value hunters is consistently underestimated."

ROUSSILLON

DOMAINE CABIRAU

The 2007s from importer Dan Kravitz's Domaine Cabirau were lauded in issue 183, but the quality and value of his two new cuvees – which I tasted before bottling – had me returning again and again to the samples and shaking my head in disbelief over the terrific values these wines represent. (Both wines will have been bottled in July.). The 2009 rendition is expected to carry the new Villages-Maury appellation.

2008 DOMAINE CABIRAU SERGE & NICOLAS

(92-93) PTS

Named for the latest pair of gentlemen who oversee his vines and the vinification of this tank-raised cuvee, the 2008 Grenache Serge & Nicolas incorporates not only another year's experience, but also a one-third proportion of fruit from really old vines unavailable for last year's "Serge & Tony" cuvee. A gorgeous aroma of smoke-wreathed pomegranate, red raspberry, sandalwood, and vivid, clean, raw red meat leads to a mouthful of vividly fresh red fruits right down to the seeds, augmented by crushed stone, licorice, and persistently striking carnality. This rich yet refreshing, practically indelible essence of Grenache can stand comparison with many a top-notch Chateauneuf-du-Pape, and I imagine (despite the absence of track record) that it will go on performing brilliantly for a half dozen or more years.

2008 DOMAINE CABIRAU MALGRÉ LES FONCTIONNAIRES

(91-92) PTS

Vinified under the supervision of the Domaine de l'Edre's Jacques Castany and Pascal Dieunidou (for more in praise of whom, see issues 173 and 183), the Cabirau 2008 Cotes du Roussillon Malgré les Fonctionnaires ("In Spite of the Civil Servants") combines Grenache with smaller, barrel-raised portions of Syrah and Carignan. Violets, blackberries, beef marrow, rosemary, and black pepper set the stage aromatically. A rich mouthful of beet and beef juices, blackberries, and cherries follows, tinged with black pepper, iodine, crushed stone, and pungent herbs. This palate-staining concentrate retains wonderful brightness and invigoration, and should be worth following for 6-8 years.

2007 DOMAINE CABIRAU SERGE & TONY

88 PTS

Named for the gentlemen who oversee his vines and vinification, the 2007 Grenache Serge & Tony is raised in tank at the Cases-de-Pene (a.k.a. "Pena") cooperative from the fruit of 20 year old vines. It is still as exuberant and stuffed with ripe black raspberry as when reviewed in issue 178. **WA Issue 183, 6-30-09.

ROUSSILLON (continued)

CUVÉE DE PEÑA

Some of the least expensive wines issuing from the cooperative in Cases-de-Pene – marketed in the U.S. under the name “Pena” – continue as a group to offer truly uncommon value.

2008 CUVÉE DE PEÑA VIOGNIER

87 PTS

Scents of nearly over-ripe honeydew melon, acacia, and lime waft decadently from the glass of 2008 Cuvee de Pena Viognier, which proceeds to offer an unexpected degree of freshness and cut on the plate, its lime and luscious melon persistently and invigoratingly tinged with white pepper and salt. If there is a more affordable case to be made for the charms of this grape variety, I don't know it. Just make sure to enjoy this within the next 9 months.

2008 CUVÉE DE PEÑA ROSÉ

88 PTS

The Grenache-Syrah 2008 Cuvée de Peña Rose (formerly labeled “Ninet de Pena”) is an ultra-refreshing yet lush bath of black pepper-infused rhubarb and strawberry that finishes with verve and grip, and is guaranteed to reel you in for sip after sip. Enjoy it over the next 6-9 months.

2008 CUVÉE DE PEÑA ROUGE

87 PTS

You might wonder how there could be a price reduction since last year on an already ridiculously inexpensive cuvee, but what's more, the Carignan-based 2008 Cuvee de Pena sneaks in under the \$25 ceiling for wines in this report even if you buy a 3-liter bag-in-the-box full of it! A resinous, green herbal, slightly reduced nose snakes off to reveal copious black fruit, toasted nut, and salt spray aromas, which set the theme for the wine's admirably-concentrated if slightly tight, tart, faintly bitter finish. Expect this to taste even better six months from now, but plan to enjoy it over the next 12-18 months.

DOMAINE DES 3 VALLÉES

Domaine des 3 Vallées is a new project of importer Dan Kravitz (wines from whose own Roussillon estate, Domaine Cabirau, are profiled elsewhere in this report, as well as in issue 183), and takes advantage of the custom crush facilities of the cooperative of Tautavel as well as of quality fruit available from its members.

2008 DOMAINE DES 3 VALLÉES GRENACHE GRIS

90 PTS

The Domaine des 3 Vallées 2008 Grenache Gris is remarkable in any number of respects, not least for offering sensational value. (In my view, this wine was mis-priced, but there's no going back on that now!) It marries fruit from a grower in Maury who belongs to the Tautavel coop with fruit from ancient vines on the edge of the latter village's great stone cirque, grown by its coop's largest landholder. And as for the name of this wine – Grenache Gris being notoriously unrecognized for appellation contrôlée (other than in Collioure) – thanks to American liberties and the magic of the “back” label, Kravitz can pretty much call it whatever he pleases! Intense aromas and sappy, subtly oily palate presence of pineapple and lime tinged with Szechwan pepper, musk, and smoky black tea make for a beverage of striking, utterly intriguing distinction, richly-textured yet incorporating positive tartness and cut, and depositing a lasting load of salt, pepper, chalk, and smoke. While there's no track record for this wine per se, you can count on it being worth following for at least 3-4 years. If you have not yet discovered why Grenache Gris – despite being a rarity almost entirely localized to Catalan France – is one of the world's most exciting grapes, here are some 4,000 inexpensive bottles containing all the reason you need.

2008 DOMAINE DES 3 VALLÉES COTES DU ROUSSILLON VILLAGES

(90-91) PTS

The Domaine des 3 Vallées 2008 Cotes du Roussillon-Villages – a blend of Grenache from schist with Syrah from chalk (plus 10% Carignan), half aged in new and used barrels – had been assembled but not yet bottled when I sampled it in June. Smelling and tasting of blueberry preserves laced with maple syrup and herbal essences, its soothing, liqueur-like richness is enlivened by a tart, fresh black fruit edge and the pungency of black pepper. An impressively persistent finish seals the irresistible deal. This should be worth following for at least 3-4 years.

LANGUEDOC

LA NOBLE

2008 LA NOBLE CHARDONNAY

87 PTS

Once again proves that even if you are under no pressure to select a wine labeled “Chardonnay,” there is a ridiculously inexpensive one of considerable merit. Importer Dan Kravitz says the cool weather made it hard to source and blend the 2008 Chardonnay. To enhance a sense of both minerality and richness, he included 15% of fruit from Limoux and encouraged some lots to go through malo-lactic transformation. Green apple, passion fruit, and mango inform this tart yet succulent wine whose phenolic fruit skin, apple pip, toasted nut, and saline elements enhanced its invigoration. Drink it until bottles marked “2009” appear.

2008 LA NOBLE MERLOT

86 PTS

The 2008 Merlot smells of fresh red raspberries, dried herbs, and ripe tomato; is bright and stimulating, if slightly bitter on the palate; and finishes with plenty of refreshment and a humus-like undertone. For easy drinking and some genuine, positive Merlot character, no one can complain at this price.

LA GALINIÈRE

2008 LA GALINIÈRE MERLOT

86 PTS

Jean Panis of Domaine Donjon has crafted a 2008 Merlot that is slightly weedy but also black currant-scented. It improves on the palate, with suggestions of humus, chalk, and toasted nuts inflecting the fruit, and a soft, light, easy-to-drink personality. Enjoy it over the next 9-12 months.

CHÂTEAU/DOMAINE DE LANCYRE

Bernard Durand and Regis Valentin continue to render distinctively delicious wines that offer outstanding value of a sort not always to be found in the increasingly renowned Pic Saint-Loup sub-appellation. **All WA Issue 183, 6-30-09, except in case of 2008 Lancyre Roussanne.

2008 DOMAINE DE LANCYRE ROUSSANE

91 PTS

Now that their 2008 Roussanne has been bottled, it can take its place as the latest in an amazingly successful series of wines (blended with a small amount of Viognier), and the estate and importer have contrived to even lower the price a bit from last year's. Ripe, intense apricot and lime are laced with salt and smoky black tea on a lush and expansive palate, with suggestions of apricot skin, lime zest, and salt adding to a finishing impression of striking invigoration. This rich yet bracing wine should – based on the track record of past vintages – be worth following for 5-7 years.

2007 LANCYRE ROUSSANNE

90 PTS

Aromas of white peach, pear, lime, kumquat, white pepper, honey, and lavender in their 2007 Roussanne lead to a dense, subtly creamy and oily, yet juicy, refreshing palate featuring salt and pepper-dusted melon, pear skin, and citrus. This really fans out in the finish, with herbal and floral notes re-emerging. Having had a chance to taste a few older bottlings last December, I am now confident in saying that if you can keep your hands off of a few bottles of this for 2-3 years you will be rewarded with a different sort of pleasure. In Europe, this bottling – which, incidentally, includes a dollop of Viognier – is labeled “Rouviere.”

2007 LANCYRE LA COSTE D'ALEYRAC

(90-91) PTS

A cuvee of Syrah and Grenache with a bit of Carignan first essayed in 2000, the Lancyre 2007 Coteaux du Languedoc Pic Saint-Loup La Coste d'Aleyrac – due to have been bottled in February – is full of ripe black fruits to be sure, but offers more herbal, carnal, and mineral dimensions than the corresponding 2006. An impression of saline, marjoram-laced beef bouillon with cherry and purple plum extend to a long, satisfyingly juicy, clear, faintly and stimulatingly bitter finish. Look for this exceptional value to offer pleasure for another 3-4 years.

LANGEUDOC (continued)

2006 LANCYRE LA COSTE D'ALEYRAC

90 PTS

Lancyre's 2006 Coteaux du Languedoc Pic Saint-Loup La Coste d'Aleyrac offers sweet cherry and plum fruit with contrasting bitterness of their pits and a dusting of cardamom and nutmeg; a fetching combination of creamy texture and refreshment; and a lip-smacking finish. This exuberant and polished blend – while not riveting in its complexity – will offer outstanding value and pleasure over the next 2-3 years.

2007 LANCYRE VIEILLES VIGNES

(91-92) PTS

Domaine Lancyre's 2007 Coteaux du Languedoc Pic Saint-Loup Vieilles Vignes – from Syrah with 35% Grenache, tasted assembled from tank – offers a marrow-like sweet, meaty savor as well as stone and graphite minerality to complement its abundance of rich, fresh black raspberry, plum, and cherry. This superb value offers abundant herbal inner-mouth aromatics as well, and clings with invigorating vivacity and intriguing complexity. I would feel comfortable holding it for 4-6 years. For a note on the impressive 2006 Vieilles Vignes bottling, consult issue 178.

PUYDEVAL

2008 PUYDEVAL

90 PTS

Lovers of Cabernet Franc – not to mention value – do not miss this 2008 Puydeval, blended with 28% Syrah and 10% Merlot grown near Carcassonne, and conceived and executed by ambitious oenologist-negotiant Jeff Carrell! Machine oil, mulberry, and incense form an intense and striking aromatic display that leads to a rich, almost fat, 14% alcohol, yet positively bright palate, where resin-, cinnamon-, walnut oil, and mint-tinged dark chocolate and mulberries hang on for a surprisingly stubborn finish marked by piquant nuttiness and well-integrated bitterness. This is archetypal Cabernet Franc in character, implausibly rich, and ludicrously under-priced. Plan to enjoy it for at least the next three years, but make your move quickly, because only 2,800 cases (out of 10,000) were slated to reach American shores.

2007 PUYDEVAL

89 PTS

With just a tad more Syrah than the 2008, the 2007 Puydeval smells delightfully of fresh blackberries, walnut oil, tobacco, and green herbs; is surprisingly fat and full on the palate; yet finishes with brightness and invigoration. Whether or not the older barriques in which Puydeval spends a short time were responsible for a slight finishing dryness in the otherwise excellent 2006, these two latest vintages suffer no such blemish and each represents a genuinely original wine making tour de force.

DOMAINE MASSAMIER LA MIGNARDE

2008 DOMAINE MASSAMIER LA MIGNARDE CUVÉE des OLIVIERS ROSÉ 88 PTS

Massamier's Cinsault-based 2008 Cuvee des Oliviers Rosé – another instance where importer Dan Kravitz and his supplier have squeezed down the price since last year of an already ridiculously inexpensive wine – smells of white pepper- and marjoram-tinged cherries. Its tart, pungent, sappy refreshment – not to mention a genuine finish – are far more than one has any right to expect for a single digit retail price, but make sure to drink up the last of it by next Spring.

MOURREL AZURAT

2007 MOURREL AZURAT FITOU

88 PTS

Frantz Venes of Chateau Massamier-la-Mignarde in Minervois crafts this custom 2007 Fitou at the quality-conscious Mont Tauch cooperative. It marries Grenache, Syrah, and Mourvèdre from the coastal portion of its appellation with Carignan from its mountainous interior, and delivers a simple but impressively palate-staining, rich yet downright refreshing load of ripe blackberry and black currant, tinged with smoke and underlain with crushed stone. While it will probably keep for a few years, I would opt to enjoy it over the next 12-18 months while the fruit is freshest.

LANGEUDOC (continued)

DOMAINE DU PIOCH D'OR

2008 DOMAINE DU PIOCH D'OR PICPOUL DE PINET 88 PTS

The 2008 Coteaux du Languedoc Picpoul de Pinet of Domaine Pioch d'Or – which was an estate new to me – represents yet another of the many delightful bargains from old vines in this coastal appellation. An ocean spray nose, winter squash and pumpkin tinged with lime zest, salt, chalk, and black walnut bitterness is followed by a palate of surprising fullness and grip, yet packing all the refreshment one expects from this genre. Enjoy it over the next 9-12 months.

VILLA DES ANGES

2008 VILLA DES ANGES CABERNET SAUVIGNON 89 PTS

Villa des Anges 2008 Cabernet Sauvignon is as remarkable and improbable a wine value as I have tasted in years. Jacqueline Menard de Ginestous (whose estate is officially named Espitalet des Anges) and oenologist Jeff Carrel have done the seemingly impossible – even forgetting the price – by crafting a full-bodied, subtly oily-textured, palpably dense, lip-smacking, not vegetal, yet not sweet Cabernet in the Languedoc. What's more, there are 15,000 cases of it! Juniper, huckleberry, mint, rosemary, black walnut, dark chocolate, and green olive are prominent in the nose and on the palate, leading to a considerable finish. One-third went through malo-lactic transformation in older barrels, and the rest (including 15% Merlot) was left in tank. Even if you think a \$9 wine is beneath you, you'll want some of this just to stump other wine snobs in blind tastings. I won't try to predict how it will age, but certainly you can plan on at least 12-18 months of enjoyment, and who knows, perhaps the 2009 will be even better.

SOUTHERN RHÔNE (**all WA Issue 183, 6-30-09)

SÉLECTION LAURENCE FÉRAUD, PLUME BLEUE, PLAN PEGAU

These cuvees, which I previously profiled before they were bottled, are now in the marketplace, and they represent three bargains made by Laurence Féraud at the famed Chateauneuf du Pape estate, Domaine Pegau.

2007 PLUME BLEUE 87 PTS

The 2007 Plume Bleue is performing even better than when I reviewed it last summer. This cuvee, also called Pegovino in markets outside the United States, offers plenty of sweet kirsch, earthy, peppery, spicy notes as well as an attractive round, expansive mouthfeel. A blend of equal parts Syrah and Grenache, it should drink well for two years.

NV PLAN PEGAU LOT #2007 88 PTS

The non-vintage Plan Pegau Lot #2007 reveals abundant meaty/kirsch notes intermixed with aromas of licorice, lavender, and earth. It is a full-flavored red that could easily be mistaken for a good Chateauneuf du Pape. It, too, should be drunk over the next two years.

2007 SÉLECTION LAURENCE FÉRAUD SÉGURET 90 PTS

The outstanding 2007 Cotes du Rhone-Villages Séguret is a brilliant wine as well as a fabulous bargain. Aromas of licorice, lavender, cassis, and kirsch emerge from this dense ruby/purple-hued offering. Full-bodied and pure with the sweet tannins that make this vintage so impressive, it can be enjoyed over the next 5-6 years.

SOUTHERN RHÔNE (continued, **all WA Issue 183, 6-30-09)

DOMAINE LE PLAN-VERMEERSCH

2007 LE PLAN-VERMEERSCH GT-A

90 PTS

The dense blue/purple-colored 2007 GT-A Vin de Pays du Drome, is made from Aramon, a grape varietal that is rarely encountered anymore. It offers up abundant aromas of flowers, incense, graphite, pen ink, and black fruits followed by a full-bodied, powerful mouthfeel. This unique wine should drink nicely for 3-4 years.

2007 LE PLAN-VERMEERSCH GT-C

88 PTS

The dark ruby/purple-tinged, medium-bodied 2007 GT-C Vin de Pays du Drome (100% Carignan) exhibits dusty, earthy notes intertwined with hints of tree bark, berries, kirsch, and spice. Although not as impressive as the Aramon, it is a heck-of-a-good wine as well as a decent value.

2007 LE PLAN-VERMEERSCH GT-G

91 PTS

The star of this trio is the 2007 GT-G Cotes du Rhone, a 100% Grenache cuvee produced from very old vines. An explosive perfume of black cherry liqueur, licorice, pepper, and roasted Provencal herbs is followed by a full-bodied, expansive, fleshy, pure, beautifully textured wine that can be enjoyed over the next 3-4 years.

PROVENCE (all WA Issue 183, 6-30-09)**

COMMANDERIE DE LA BARGEMONE

This is a reliable estate in beautiful Provence, and their just released 2008 whites and roses are delicious efforts...

2008 COMMANDERIE DE LA BARGEMONE CUVÉE MARINA WHITE

87 PTS

The 2008 Cuvee Marina white is dominated by its Sauvignon Blanc character. It reveals a subtle grassy, melony, and grapefruit-like nose, fresh, light to medium-bodied flavors, and plenty of crisp acidity. Enjoy it over the next year or so.

2008 COMMANDERIE DE LA BARGEMONE ROSÉ

87 PTS

The light pink-colored, light-bodied 2008 Rose exhibits delicate framboise and strawberry notes as well as fresh, primary flavors. It should be consumed over the next 6-9 months.

2008 COMMANDERIE DE LA BARGEMONE CUVÉE MARINA ROSÉ

88 PTS

More seriously endowed with more body is the copper/salmon-colored 2008 Cuvee Marina rose. A bigger, deeper, more complex effort, it should be drunk with more flavorful dishes.

2007 COMMANDERIE DE LA BARGEMONE RED

87 PTS

As for the red wines, the 2007 red reveals beautifully sweet tannins as well as a sexy, sensual style. Its pure, kirsch and black fruit notes are offered in a medium-bodied, supple format.

2007 COMMANDERIE DE LA BARGEMONE CUVÉE MARINA RED

87+ PTS

The 2007 Cuvee Marina red is a bigger, denser, more tannic and oaky effort, but it does not appear to be any better than the less expensive offering. It is built for a longer life of 3-4 years.

2007 COMMANDERIE DE LA BARGEMONE CUVÉE ELISABETH RED

90 PTS

The star of this line-up is Bargemone's blend of 40% Syrah, 40% Cabernet Sauvignon, and 20% Grenache, the 2007 Cuvee Elisabeth. This outstanding, dark ruby/purple-tinged 2007 offers plenty of black cherry and cassis fruit, beautiful purity, medium body, attractive depth and suppleness, and no hard edges. Drink it over the next 3-4 years.

SAVOIE

PIERRE BONIFACE

2008 PIERRE BONIFACE APREMONT

89 PTS

The 2008 Apremont Les Rocailles is as fine as any of the score of vintages I have tasted, with the cool summer and strong aromatics that characterize this vintage in much of Europe dovetailing beautifully with the delicacy, refreshment, and mineral nuance that are generally this wine's strong points. Pear, lemon, and floral aromas lead to an invigorating, salt- and pear skin-tinged palate impression and a savory finish of greater grip than I have come to expect from this versatile wine. Enjoy it over the next 9-12 months.

2008 PIERRE BONIFACE APREMONT PRESTIGE

89 PTS

The name of Pierre Boniface might disappear from the label of Les Rocailles, but not only are his successors upholding admirable standards, their 2008 Apremont Les Rocailles Prestige comes from the one vineyard that Boniface himself still owns, its vines having been planted by his grandfather. There is a stonier mineral aspect to this along with salinity; a palpable sense of extract for all of the wine's alcoholic lightness and refreshment; but less sheer charm than in the regular Les Rocailles bottling. Give this 6-9 more months in bottle, and then revisit around the time that the regular 2009 appears on the market.

2008 PIERRE BONIFACE CHIGNIN BERGERON

90 PTS

New to this winery's line-up is their 2007 Chignin-Bergeron Les Rocailles, an outstanding example of the special charms of Roussanne (a.k.a. Bergeron) grown on terraces in Chignin. Clove, mint, and black pepper in the nose put me in mind of Gewurztraminer, as for that matter does the wine's subtle oiliness of texture. But here we have a bright, zesty, and saline palate that's typically alpine. Tart yet ripe pineapple and salty, pungent mineral notes contribute to a real whiplash of a finish. Pegging this at \$25 is a stretch, depending on the fortunes of the dollar, but if you have to pay a couple of dollars more, the wine will still be a bargain, and it will be interesting to follow for at least 3-4 years.

ALSACE

DOMAINE BRUNO HUNOLD

2007 DOMAINE BRUNO HUNOLD RIESLING

87 PTS

The Hunold 2007 Riesling is certainly a highly invigorating and well-concentrated example of its genre, with lime and pineapple fruit and a slightly oily, bitter palate. Enjoy it over the next couple of years.

2007 DOMAINE BRUNO HUNOLD PINOT GRIS

88 PTS

Hunold's 2007 Pinot Gris smells of fresh lime, peach, and smoked meats, Lush, luscious, and faintly oily on the palate, it is less concentrated than the corresponding Riesling but actually makes a virtue out of this, in its loose, surprisingly refreshing way, finishing tinged with bitter-sweet orange and lime zest. Enjoy it over the next 12-18 months.

2007 DOMAINE BRUNO HUNOLD GEWURZTRAMINER Côte de Rouffach

88 PTS

The nicely-concentrated Hunold 2007 Gewurztraminer Cote de Rouffach is redolent of clove oil, celery seed, and rose petal; softly-textured yet not without refreshment; and finishes with a highly satisfying and (to me, at least) welcome absence of sweetness along with black pepper and clove pungency. It should be quite useful for the next 2-3 years.

CALIFORNIA (WA Issue 183, 6-30-09)**

2008 TRAVIS MONTEREY CHARDONNAY

88 PTS

This non-malolactic, non-oaked, stainless steel-aged Chardonnay represented by importer Dan Kravitz is a consistent value pick. The medium-bodied 2008 exhibits loads of pear, orange blossom, and lemon custard-like notes along with a hint of minerality, good acids, plenty of flavor, and surprising body as well as length. Enjoy it over the next 1-2 years.

ARGENTINA

NOTRO

Notro is a negociant label owned by importer Dan Kravitz.

2008 NOTRO SANGIOVESE/BONARDA

85 PTS

The 2008 Sangiovese - Bonarda offers up aromas of earth and black cherry leading to a smooth-textured wine with savory flavors, lively acidity, and good length. Drink it over the next 2-3 years.

2008 NOTRO TORRONTES

85 PTS

The 2008 Torrontes is a fragrant white with aromas of honey, spring flowers, and white peach. Dry on the palate with lively acidity, this is an ideal wine for drinking on a hot summer day.

2008 NOTRO CABERNET SAUVIGNON BARRICA

86 PTS

The 2008 Cabernet Sauvignon Barrica delivers a spicy perfume with notes of cassis and black currant. Medium-bodied, well-balanced, and flavorful, this medium-long Cabernet will provide pleasure over the next 4-5 years.

2008 NOTRO CHARDONNAY BARRICA

87 PTS

The 2008 Chardonnay Barrica exhibits spicy oak, apple, and poached pear. The wine has lively acidity, ripe flavors, and solid length. Enjoy it over the next 2-3 years.

ALFREDO ROCA (*more than twice as many bargain wines than any other Argentine producer!*)

The Alfredo Roca portfolio contains a number of notable values.

2008 ALFREDO ROCA CHENIN BLANC - CHARDONNAY

87 PTS

The 2008 Chenin Blanc-Chardonnay has a medium straw-colored wine with a fragrant nose of baking spices, melon, and pear. Dry but fruity on the palate, this tasty effort can be enjoyed over the next 1-2 years.

2008 ALFREDO ROCA MALBEC - MERLOT

85 PTS

The 2008 Malbec-Merlot is a straightforward, fruity wine with no hard edges. This quaffable effort should be consumed over the next 3 years.

2008 ALFREDO ROCA DEDICACIÓN PERSONAL SAUVIGNON BLANC

90 PTS

The 2008 Sauvignon Blanc Dedicación Personal was barrel-fermented and aged. It offers up an expressive nose of spice box, floral notes, citrus, and fresh herbs. Layered on the palate with plenty of ripe fruit buttressed by vibrant acidity, this lengthy effort will provide much pleasure over the next 2-3 years.

2008 ALFREDO ROCA CHARDONNAY

87 PTS

The unoaked 2008 Chardonnay is light gold-colored with an aromatic array of apple, poached pear, and mineral. Ripe on the palate, some tropical notes emerge along with enough acidity for balance. Drink this pleasant Chardonnay over the next 1-2 years.

ARGENTINA (continued)

- 2008 ALFREDO ROCA DEDICACIÓN PERSONAL CHARDONNAY 88 PTS**
The 2008 Chardonnay Dedicación Personal went through full malolactic fermentation. It offers up an attractive perfume of spice box, lemon, and white peach. Ripe on the palate with excellent depth, this lengthy Chardonnay will drink well for another 2-3 years.
- 2007 ALFREDO ROCA DEDICACIÓN PERSONAL BONARDA 87 PTS**
The 2007 Bonarda Dedicación Personal spent 12 months in seasoned French and American oak. Spicy, ripe, and sweet on the palate, it is a fine match for bistro cuisine.
- 2008 ALFREDO ROCA PINOT NOIR 86 PTS**
The medium ruby-colored 2008 Pinot Noir offers scents of damp earth, cherry, and strawberry. On the palate spice notes also emerge and the wine reveals good varietal character. With good grip and length, this is a lot of Pinot Noir for the money.
- 2005 ALFREDO ROCA FAMILY RESERVE PINOT NOIR 87 PTS**
The 2005 Pinot Noir Family Reserve has a bit more oak (one year in new French barrels) and was produced from lower yields. The attractive flavors are a bit muted by the oak but this is a quality effort with good grip and length.
- 2006 ALFREDO ROCA MERLOT 87 PTS**
The 2006 Merlot is a spicy wine with assertive cassis and black currant aromas and flavors. Nicely balanced, this well-priced wine will deliver pleasure for another 4 years.
- 2006 ALFREDO ROCA SYRAH 87 PTS**
The 2006 Syrah is dark ruby-colored with aromas of spicy blueberries and smoked meat. Sweetly-fruited on the palate with a plush texture, the wine has good grip and enough structure to blossom for another 1-2 years.
- 2007 ALFREDO ROCA CABERNET SAUVIGNON 87 PTS**
Roca's 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon delivers aromas of spice box, pencil lead, cassis, and a hint of chocolate. Ripe and succulent, this balanced effort over-delivers in a big way.
- 2007 ALFREDO ROCA DEDICACIÓN PERSONAL CABERNET SAUVIGNON 88 PTS**
The 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon Dedicación Personal offers greater concentration, a bigger mouthful of fruit, and a longer finish. It is worth the slight premium.
- 2006 ALFREDO ROCA MALBEC 87 PTS**
The 2006 Malbec offers up plenty of spicy black cherry aromas and flavors. With good depth, savory flavors, and solid balance, this tasty Malbec can be enjoyed over the next 4 years.
- 2006 ALFREDO ROCA FAMILY RESERVE MALBEC 89 PTS**
The 2006 Malbec Family Reserve is a glass-coating opaque purple. Aromas of smoke, mineral, incense, and black cherry lead to a savory, rich, structured Malbec with succulent fruit, enough tannin for balance, and 1-2 years of aging potential.
- 2004 ALFREDO ROCA FAMILY RESERVE TEMPRANILLO 89 PTS**
The 2004 Family Reserve Tempranillo has an attractive bouquet of spice box, tobacco, damp earth, black cherry, and blackberry. Medium-bodied on the palate, it is sweetly-fruited, concentrated, and nicely balanced. This lengthy effort will evolve for 1-2 years and provide optimal drinking from 2011 to 2019.

ARGENTINA (continued)

CALATHUS

This is a strong group of wines from Calathus.

2007 CALATHUS CHARDONNAY

90 PTS

The 2007 Chardonnay is light gold-colored with an attractive nose of toast, spiced apple, and poached pear. On the palate it is medium-bodied, smooth textured, and flavorful. Nicely balanced, it will provide pleasant drinking for another 3 years.

2007 CALATHUS PINOT NOIR

90 PTS

The medium ruby-colored 2007 Pinot Noir offers up enticing aromas of black cherry and black raspberry leading to a silky, medium-bodied Pinot Noir with excellent concentration, good depth, and a seamless finish. It is a very good value in quality Pinot.

2007 CALATHUS MALBEC

91 PTS

The dark ruby-colored 2007 Malbec offers up a spicy bouquet of toast, black cherry, damp earth, and incense. Complex on the palate, it has plenty of savory fruit, layers of flavor, good balance, and a lengthy finish. It will evolve for 2-3 years and provide prime drinking from 2012 to 2019.

2007 CALATHUS CABERNET SAUVIGNON

85 PTS

The 2007 Cabernet Sauvignon is a bit reticent aromatically. With swirling, black currant and spice aromas emerge leading to a slightly lean, wanting to be elegant Cabernet.

Contact us for more information:

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